

1. An Oversight Commission Must Be Able to Streamline Information (& corresponding recommendations for structure)

We need to streamline the process by which oversight bodies request information from Probation to avoid duplication and the unnecessary expenditure of Probation time and resources spent responding to multiple agencies, generating reports, and repetitive questions. There should be a mechanism by which one oversight body compiles inquiries and requests for information; receives information and reports from all citizen oversight or advocacy groups; evaluates information; and, synthesizes duplicative requests and/or repetitive concerns. This oversight body should be the sole oversight entity to which Probation must respond with requests for information. Such streamlining might also save County resources.

- a. This entity would streamline the flow of information/ reports/ recommendations into a comprehensive system that addresses and responds to concerns. This entity would ensure a process by which corrective actions are followed and monitored by citizen oversight groups on an ongoing basis.
- b. If deficiencies continue or Probation shows a lack of responsiveness, this entity will have direct access to the BOS.
- c. This entity must have sufficient authority or “teeth” - perhaps even the ability to weigh in on Probation’s budget requests prior to approval.
- d. This entity must have a meaningful enforcement mechanism to hold the Probation Department accountable.
- e. This body would report back directly to the BOS.

2. An Oversight Commission Needs “Teeth” and the Authority to Respond

There needs to be a process by which the comprehensive oversight entity can respond in a timely fashion (or generate a timely response from the appropriate party) to concerns and issues raised. Several existing oversight bodies currently face constraints that prohibit the ability a timely response (e.g., being limited to the “power of the pen” or the ability to generate an annual report as a response).

3. **Need for a “Live” and Current Database**
LA County should have database to maintain and catalogue all reports; recommendations; status updates on corrective actions plans; inspection results; etc. This database should include links to the various reports and be available and easily accessible by the public, county departments, citizen oversight entities, advocacy groups, etc. to promote transparency.
4. **Need for Improved Communication Between Oversight Entities.**
There is a need for better communication between probation oversight entities. The lack of coordination and clear lines of communication makes the department susceptible to critiques, and even lawsuits.
5. **An Oversight Commission Should Carefully Review the Mission and Directives of all Entities with Oversight Authority**
A comprehensive Probation Oversight Commission should review the mission and directive for other entities that have oversight responsibilities for Probation, and include reporting responsibilities and the chain of command based on the entity’s actual role and responsibilities, as well as the roles and responsibilities dictated by the BOS or state statute. The Commission’s greatest role might be to facilitate meaningful collaboration, coordination, and sharing of information between these bodies to create comprehensive oversight.
6. **Greater Collaboration Between LACOE and Probation Must be Fostered**
The Oversight Commission should take special care to clarify the role (and overlap) between Probation and LACOE, and help ensure coordination and an effective process for the two agencies to work together, share information, and report regularly (to one another and to the Commission) about educational progress.
7. **Reporting Authority for the Senior Director of Education Services in Probation Should Reflect Collaboration Between LACOE and Probation.**
The reporting authority for Dr. Jesus Corral, the Senior Director of Education Services in the Los Angeles County Probation Department, should be clarified and reflect coordination and collaboration between LACOE and Probation. The Chief Probation Officer and the Superintendent of LACOE should be working together on comprehensive education reform. The community college district should be intentionally included in this collaboration, and in a revised reporting structure, as well.
8. **The CERC Quarterly Report Should Serve as a Model**
The CERC quarterly report (including corrective actions plans, recommendations, and follow-up) may be a model for other entities to utilize to stay current with respect to various issues, actions, recommendations, and status updates. This process was just changed for juveniles, and might be replicated on the adult side (where it currently does not exist), as well.

9. Separate Clearance Process for VISTO

There should be a separate clearance process for VISTO (volunteers and interns) from Human Resources Employment processing/clearance. At the same time, we have to take special precaution and measures to screen who can come in to facilities. (Example: we have to ensure we don't allow a pimp in to solicit girls, etc.)

10. Special Protections for TAY

There must be special protections for transition age youth (TAY) – ages 16 – 24 – within the Probation Department. Such protection might come in the form of a special TAY division within the Department.

11. Need for job readiness/training

Vocational training and job readiness, preparation, and training should be prioritized and offered, especially to youth in the juvenile probation camps.

12. Capital Improvements

Capital Improvements should be included as a part of ongoing oversight.

13. Need for a Strategic Plan for Juvenile Justice in Los Angeles County

To address the current, siloed structure with multiple bodies looking at what probation is doing, we need a new, comprehensive strategic plan for juvenile justice in Los Angeles County. This plan must include collaboration and integration of all involved, and embody multiple, disparate disciplines. All stakeholders need to be represented at the table, including parents and family members of probationers. Questions about this strategic plan could be great interview questions for candidates for the new Chief of Probation!

14. Recommendation for Separate Oversight Commissions

We should have separate probation oversight commissions – for Juvenile Probation and Adult Probation.

15. Need for separate divisions within Probation: Adult and Juvenile

Probation should have two separate divisions for adult and juvenile. The juvenile division should include transition age youth (TAY) ages 18-24.

16. Need for a Juvenile Justice Commission in Los Angeles.

Los Angeles County should have a juvenile justice commission. In other counties, it is established through the county charter. It could be changed back in Los Angeles County so that we have one, and it should be.

17. Importance of Collaboration

A chief goal of any Probation Oversight Commission should be effective, meaningful, and ongoing collaboration/integration.

18. Inclusion of the Courts in Oversight (of adult and juvenile)

In the spirit of collaboration and integration, the Courts need to be included in an ongoing and meaningful way as part of all Probation oversight efforts.

19. Inclusion of the Juvenile Court in Oversight

The Juvenile Court should be included and play a greater role in juvenile probation oversight. To avoid any conflict, a juvenile court judge might participate in an advisory fashion, rather than as an appointed member.

20. Need for Evaluation

There should be a thorough, constructive, “friendly” 360 evaluation of *everyone* – all departments, individuals, and agencies, involved in the probation system. Currently, judges, and many other stakeholders are not evaluated in a meaningful, constructive way, and they should be to promote ongoing improvements of the system.

21. Need for Independence of an Oversight Commission

An Oversight Commission should be independent from any county department. This Commission should be interdisciplinary, and have the ability to influence policy, and the requisite support to be effective (a healthy budget, staff, tech support for an interactive database, etc.).

22. Qualifications of Oversight Commissioners

Oversight Commissioners should have background and experience in a variety of disciplines, including Probation, Rehabilitation, Mental Health, Public Health, Education, Health Care, Social Work, Facilities, Law Enforcement.

23. Multi-Disciplinary Teams Should Conduct Inspections of Facilities and Group Homes

Teams of people should conduct inspections of facilities. When a judge goes to inspect a juvenile high school, s/he he should be accompanied by someone from LACOE to help ensure appropriate educational questions are addressed. The Oversight Commission should help facilitate these interdisciplinary visits that include individuals from different agencies, disciplines, organizations, and existing oversight entities. All teams should include individuals and agency representatives authorized to make unannounced visits, and to speak with probationers. (When youth are interviewed, counsel should be notified in advance.)

24. The Oversight Commission Should Facilitate Coordination and Communication about Inspection Results.

When a Sybil Brand Commissioner conducts an inspection, and a Probation Commissioner conducts an inspection, the information and findings are currently rarely (or never) shared between commissions. An overarching Oversight Commission should work to ensure that all visits and inspections

are coordinated; information is shared; and follow-up is conducted in a timely manner.

25. Division of the Department

For administrative reasons, the Probation Department should stay as one Department, but have separate divisions (either two or three) to include separate juvenile and adult divisions. TAY might be included in the juvenile division, or have their own separate division. (We heard arguments for both.)

26. Role of the Ombudsman

The Ombudsman should be included as part of the Probation Oversight Commission, and be made completely independent of the Probation Department.

27. Mental health services and counseling

We need greater services for youth who are deemed “not competent” to stand trial. The court cannot order mental health services for youth who are not under the court’s jurisdiction. Mental Health services, restorative justice services, and counseling should all be available for those youth.

28. JJCPA funding.

JJCPA money should go to provide youth with pre-dispo services as soon as possible to prevent removal from the home and entry / deeper entry into the juvenile justice system. There are also a number of youth in juvenile hall who should not be there –they should be benefitting from community-based services supported by JJCPA funds.

29. Families/Relatives There needs to be greater work done to find extended relatives for youth who are frequently sent to juvenile hall for lack of a stable family situation. There is a failure to identify relatives and even fathers who might be available to care for a court-involved youth.

30. The Juvenile Reentry Council should be reinstated. It was disbanded because Probation did not want it. There is a need for it, however, and it should be reactivated once more.

31. Substance abuse is a terrible problem for youth in the juvenile and criminal justice systems. All youth in the juvenile justice system should receive the services available to youth in drug court. (There are only drug courts in three of eight locations.) We should take the drug court model and employ it for all kids. Probation must also communicate and work in closer collaboration with substance abuse programs. It is unacceptable that a youth who tests dirty from probation can still graduate from a substance abuse program (which might test the youth at different times).

32. DCFS and the Department of Mental Health Should be Included in Collaborative Oversight Discussions

There must be better collaboration between and among the departments. There are too many cases involving crossover youth and youth with mental health issues where everyone thinks someone else (a different department) is handling an issue, and critical needs go unaddressed.

33. The Oversight Commission Must Have Access to Complete Files to Conduct Its Oversight Work.

A single person's report does not paint the entire picture. Commissioners and teams conducting oversight must be able to assess issues that involve multiple agencies (e.g., probation, education, mental health, etc.), and gather information to collect data and look for trends.

34. There Must be Community Involvement in Oversight.

Community-Based organizations that serve probationers have tremendous expertise and ideas, and must be invited to the table to help weigh in on the oversight process and recommendations for reform.